

# PAPERS READ

BEFORE THE

## LANCASTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1913.

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"History herself, as seen in her own workshop."

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THE LIFE AND WORK OF GENERAL JOHN A. SUTTER.

MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER MEETING.

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VOL. XVII. NO. 10.

PRICE TWENTY-FIVE CENTS PER COPY.

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LANCASTER, PA.

1913.

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HISTORICAL PAPERS AND ADDRESSES

OF THE

LANCASTER COUNTY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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VOLUME XVII

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LANCASTER, PA.

1913

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The Life and Work of General John A. Sutter. - - - - 279

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# THE LIFE AND WORK OF GEN. JOHN A. SUTTER.

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As a citizen of the town in which the subject of this sketch spent the last years of his life, and in which lie his remains and those of his wife, I have been prompted, as a testimony of my regard for his memory, to contribute this sketch of his life to the records of our Society. The subject matter of this sketch represents facts, data and material gathered and compiled from various sources. My task was, therefore, one of sifting material available, rather than producing something heretofore unpublished. Fiske, McMaster, Lossing and others have exhaustively chronicled the colonial history of our country. They have clearly enumerated and discussed the deeds of those who discovered the various sections of the thirteen colonies originally settled. But when we come to the period of emigration from the East to the middle and extreme West, beyond a brief account of the journey of Lewis and Clarke and a few other pioneers, historical records fail or are of the most meagre sort. It remains, therefore, for the historical societies and kindred organizations in the States exploited by these pioneers to preserve the annals pertaining to their exploits. Such has been the fate of General John Augustus Sutter. But for the fact of the discovery of gold upon his lands, his name would hardly have graced the pages of a general history of the United States. For-

tunately, therefore, for this fact, the memory of General Sutter and of his pioneer adventures cannot be omitted from the pages of any complete American history.

The name Sutter was originally spelled Sooter. The Sutter family had moved from the canton of Berne to the Grand Duchy of Baden in the year 1800. Here, in the city of Kandern, at midnight February 28, John Augustus Sutter was born. He received his common school education in the city of Kandern, but, being of Swiss parentage, he went to the city of Berne, Switzerland, to become proficient in military training. He was graduated from the military college at Berne in 1823. Shortly after his graduation he was married to Miss Anna Dübelt, who was also a native of Switzerland. Sutter, a future adventurer of the New World, entered upon a similar life in the Old. In 1823 he became an officer in the "Swiss Guard" of the French army, serving under Charles X. He saw service in the Spanish campaign of 1823-24 and in the vain resistance at Grenoble by Charles X., to the three-days' revolution of July, 1830. After the overthrow of the Bourbon monarchy, he returned to Switzerland and served in that army. He was noted for his bravery, generous, frank, and confiding nature, and faithful and conscientious discharge of his duties. He left the Swiss army at the age of thirty years. Though one writer states that this ambitious young officer emigrated to the New World because of his desire to retrieve a dissipated fortune, I would rather have you believe that it was the intrepid military spirit, the traditional Swiss love of freedom in the breast of young Sutter, the glowing reports of the opportunities for a greater life to be found in the rising

young Republic of the West, which were the impelling forces of Sutter's determination to emigrate to America.

Thus we find this daring young Swiss Captain, filled with the desire of founding a Swiss colony in America, landing on the free American shores at New York in July, 1834. From New York he went with an expedition to St. Charles, Mo., but, the vessel containing his belongings having been sunk in the Mississippi river, he remained for a short time at Westport, and here declared his intention of becoming a citizen of the United States. He went to New Mexico, but in 1836 returned to Missouri. The following year, however, he returned to New Mexico and settled at Santa Fe. While there he learned much of Upper California from the trappers who occasionally wandered into Santa Fe. Accordingly, in March, 1838, he joined a party of American trappers and went with them to their rendezvous in the Rocky Mountains. From here, Sutter, with six horsemen, crossed the ridge, made their way, via Forts Hill, Baisi and Walla Walla, to Oregon, descended the Columbia river, and, after many hardships, succeeded in reaching Fort Vancouver. And now, following his course briefly, we find him taking passage to the Sandwich Islands, embarking from thence, after a delay of five or six months, for Sitka, Alaska, disposing of his cargo here, sailing down the coast of Western United States and compelled by storms to put in at San Francisco Bay. His ship anchored opposite Yerba Buena, now San Francisco, July 2, 1839. Here a new difficulty arose. The Mexican officials boarded his vessel and ordered him to Monterey, a port ninety miles farther south, the only port of entry on the west coast of California at that time. Bent upon

securing lands, Sutter at once called upon Governor Alvarado, and requested lands on the Sacramento river for colonization. He was granted a passport, the promise of citizenship, and such lands as he wanted if he returned within a year. Failure to secure capable guides, hostile and treacherous Indians did not deter this determined leader with his party of ten white men and eight Kanakas from the Sandwich islands in their efforts to reach the mouth of the Sacramento river. They succeeded, and continued to a point ten miles below the site of the present capital of California. After having annihilated and subsequently pacified a body of two hundred Indians, they were guided to the mouth of the Feather river. Fearing attacks from hostile Indians, the Sutter party returned to the mouth of the American river, where, August 16, 1839, on the south fork of the river, at a point now within the limits of the city of Sacramento, Sutter's effects were landed. Three weeks later he moved to the spot upon which he subsequently erected "Sutter's Fort." Only his original fourteen companions made up his colony. No one can dispute the fact that the General displayed extraordinary judgment and remarkable foresight in the selection of the spot for the establishment of his colony. Thus, I have briefly sketched the wanderings of General Sutter. Here, then, we find this courtier, carefully trained soldier, polished and benevolent gentleman, entering upon a new field of endeavor, and planting his little colony.

The chief source of annoyance to the colony were the Indians, who were continually making attacks upon them. Upon one occasion, a party of eight white men surprised a party of

several hundred Indians and put them to rout. This defeat of the Indians gave Sutter possession of the entire Sacramento and part of the San Joaquin Valley. Many of these Indians afterwards became civilized and served as artisans and soldiers. Though I have not been able to authenticate this story, it is related that on one occasion General Sutter was asleep, and was about to be attacked by a hostile Indian, when a large mastiff, Brave, the property of Sutter, sprang upon the Indian assailant and saved his master's life.

In his journal General Sutter says: "It is a wonder we got no swamped a many time; all time with an Indian crew and a Kanaka at the helm." (He says this in reference to going to San Francisco in an open boat.) In June, 1841, Sutter visited Monterey and was made a Mexican citizen. He received a grant of eleven leagues of land from Alverado under the title of New Helvetia. He was also given a commission as Governor of the Northern frontier. During this same year Alexander Ratchaff, Governor of the Russian possessions known as "Ross and Bodega," settlements near the entrance of San Francisco Bay, called on him and offered to sell these colonies. With the instincts of a shrewd business man, the Swiss soldier negotiated the purchase for \$30,000, to be paid in installments covering a period of four years. His purchase included several thousand head of live stock, a schooner of 180 tons, small arms, and several pieces of ordnance, among which were pieces used by Bonaparte during his retreat from Moscow, and presented by the Czar to the Russian American Company. In 1844, finding his original grant of eleven leagues too small for his constantly growing herds, he petitioned Manuel Michelto-

rena for a grant or purchase of the sobrante or surplus over the first eleven leagues of land within the bounds of the Alvarado grant. The Governor acceded to the request of Sutter in February, 1845, partly on account of Sutter's services in putting down the rebellion. During the war, Sutter continued in the service of Mexico. However, his attitude toward the emigrants who applied to him was cordial and kind. There are innumerable instances of where he lent emigrants horses, cattle and provision and shelter whenever they happened to come to his fort. The "History of the Donner Party," a book written by C. F. McGlashan, Esq., of California, is replete with instances of Gen. Sutter's generosity. The American flag was raised over Sutter's fort July 11, 1846. The fort was for a while used as a garrison for the United States, Sutter having been placed in command. The erection of the fort, which was a quadrangular adobe structure capable of admitting a thousand men, was begun in 1841 and completed in 1844. In 1846, Gen. Castro, on behalf of the Mexican Government, offered the General \$100,000 for his holdings, but he promptly refused.

In 1848 Sutter had attained the zenith of his prosperity. He had fulfilled the terms of his grant, his cherished dream had been realized. It was, indeed, New Helvetia. In addition to his fort he owned all the land in sight. He had thirteen thousand head of horses, cattle, sheep and hogs. Little did he dream of the evil days before him. Ere long he would open Pandora's box. General Sutter's creative genius is clearly shown by the extensive improvements he made upon his estate. He cut a mill race, three miles long, at a cost of \$25,000;



erected a mill, primitive though it was, having no bolting machine, the middlings, bran and flour being separated by a sieve. He also erected a sawmill at a cost of \$10,000. In addition to these he had a winery, distillery and tannery. General Stockton had appointed the soldier Governor of the district, and Kearney had appointed him Indian agent. Space will not permit me to speak further concerning the life at the fort; suffice it to say that with all the wealth he possessed at this time, he was contented to live a simple, generous, hospitable, unostentatious life, among the Americans, Irish, Germans and civilized Indians, who were members of his household. He was as a patriarch to his people, advising and re-proving, and punishing whenever necessary. He was Judge, jury, counsel and prosecutor in all formal trials. Adam, one of his Indians, lazy and shiftless fellows that they were, was on one occasion tried under such circumstances, and, after a lengthy discourse upon the seriousness of the offense, he was sentenced to receive thirty lashes with the lariat.

### **Discovery of Gold.**

The discovery of gold upon his lands was at once his making as well as his unmaking. I shall briefly recount this incident: Marshall, a soldier of fortune, had gone as an emigrant from New Jersey to California in 1844. He was engaged in farming until the opening of the Mexican War, when he enlisted under Fremont. Upon his return from the army he found his cattle and horses strayed and stolen. Therefore, he appealed to Sutter for work. He was thirty-eight years old, unmarried, eccentric, stubborn, vindictive, though faithful. He was an ingenious mechanic, hence

was employed by Sutter. He had been sent to select a site for the saw-mill, and found a favorable spot on the south fork of the American river, forty miles east of the fort, at a point called Cullooma, now Coloma. Here the water was excellent and the pine trees plentiful. The mill was completed in January, 1848. On the night of February 2, 1848, Marshall, his horse in a foam and all bespattered with mud, asked to see Sutter alone. Satisfied that they were alone, he drew from his pocket a pouch containing yellow grains of metal. He told Sutter that the natives and whites had picked up the shining particles. The nitric acid test proved that it was real gold. Marshall went back to the mill that same night and desired Sutter to accompany him, but, on account of the rain, he waited until the following day. When within ten miles of the mill Sutter saw something come out of the bushes and thought it was a bear, but he found that it was Marshall. Asked what he was doing, he said he become impatient at the long wait. Sutter and Marshall having satisfied themselves that there was more gold to be found, begged the laborers to keep it a secret until the crops were harvested. The story goes, however, that a Mormon wrested the secret from a teamster while partly under the influence of liquor. Another story is that the daughter of Marshall gave out the secret. This is not true, as Marshall was never married. It is also reported that the Mormons took out gold on Mormon Island in January, 1848. There is no truth in this story. Permit me to deviate from my story to speak of the career of Marshall. Bad management, trouble with the Indians and squatters, were the means of divesting Marshall from his personal and part of

his real estate. He tried to secure employment, but failed. In 1857 he planted a vineyard, but the venture was also a failure. In a letter written at the age of fifty-four he says: . . . . . "I see no reason why the Government should give to others and not to me. In God's name, can the circumstance of my being the first to find the gold region of California be a curse to deprive me of every right pertaining to a citizen under the flag? Little did my great grandsire think that one of his descendants would have such feelings when he set his name to the Articles of Independence (the farmer from New Jersey.) Hargreaves, from my advice, returned to Australia, went into the mountains and discovered gold, and was rewarded by being made wealthy by his Government. I, who discovered gold in California, have been robbed of my all. How different have been our fortunes! He can bless the nation under whose flag he was born. Should I curse mine?"

In another letter to General Bidwell he expresses the hope that he may be of assistance to General Sutter, and speaks with bitterness about the loss by fire of his home and the papers necessary to the winning of his suit. Marshall afterward continued to live on his farm near Coloma, became a member of the agricultural society, and in later years became a spiritualist. In 1872 he was voted a pension of \$200 a month for two years. This was kept up until March, 1876. Then an act was passed providing for a pension of \$100 per month for two years. He drew no pension the last seven years of his life. He died alone in his cabin in his seventy-fourth year. A \$5,000 monument has since been erected on the summit of Marshall Hill, in Coloma, at an altitude of 3,000

feet. It is located about half a mile from Sutter's mill site.

It would be an old story to tell you about the conditions following the announcement of the discovery of gold—nobody willing to work, unharvested crops, squatted land, stolen and slaughtered cattle, and, above all, no law to adjust claims. During the rush of 1849-1850, a party of five men killed and sold \$60,000 worth of Sutter's cattle and got away without apprehension. By the first of January, 1852, the so-called settlers, under the pretense of pre-emption, appropriated all of Sutter's horses, cattle and hogs to their own use and occupied his lands.

In such a predicament, it was but natural for the General to seek relief in the Courts of the United States. His efforts in this direction cover a period of about eight years. I could not expect you to listen to the arguments in these cases, though I have here in my possession syllabi of them for your examination. I have also a map making clear the contention of the litigants. You will no doubt recall that shortly after the discovery of gold there was appointed a United States Court of Land Commissioners to pass upon all claims for land in the new country. You will also recall that I spoke of two separate grants to Sutter, one of eleven leagues, known as New Helvetia, granted to him by Alvarado, the then Governor of California, and the other called the Sobrante (surplus) of twenty-two leagues. The Land Commissioners found these awards, or grants, perfect, and, therefore, confirmed Sutter's title to them. The squatter interests, however, appealed to the United States District Court for the Northern district of California. This case was reported in Volume 27, Fed-

eral Cases, page 1,368, case No. 16,424, J. Hoffman presiding. District Court of the Northern District of California. June 10, 1861. This Court confirmed the decree of the Land Commissioners. The squatters, however, appealed the case, and the U. S. Supreme Court (Report in 2 Wallace, 69, U. S. 562) reversed the lower Court.

Following is a resume of the claims of Sutter:

The Supreme Court confirmed the grant for eleven leagues, but disapproved the action of the District Court and Board of Land Commissioners in reference to the second grant upon grounds purely technical. Though the grant of twenty-two leagues was one of the last acts of Micheltorena as Governor, and though it was made while the country was in a state of rebellion, the grant was expressly made in consideration of the valuable and military services of the said Sutter. In other words, the land was actually bought and paid for by the services rendered by Sutter to the Mexican Government. The Land Board had confirmed the claim under the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. This provided that Mexicans now established in territories previously belonging to Mexico, and who remain for the future within the limits of the United States, as defined by the present treaty, shall be free to continue where they now reside or to return at any time to the Mexican Republic, retaining the property which they possess in the said territories, or disposing thereof and moving the proceeds wherever they please without their being subjected to any contribution, tax or charge whatever. The Supreme Court acknowledged that the grant was a genuine and meritorious one, and then decided in favor of the

squatter interests on purely technical grounds. The technical points referred to the exactness of the survey and meaning of certain words used in connection with the case.

Thus Sutter's ruin was accomplished. The following is an account of his indebtedness:

Expenses in money and services which formed the original consideration of the grant .....	\$ 50,000
Surveys and taxes on the same .....	50,000
Cost of litigation extending through ten years, including fees to eminent counsel, witness fees, traveling expenses, etc .....	125,000
Amount paid out to make good the covenants of deeds upon the grant, over and above what was received from sales .....	100,000
Total .....	<u>\$325,000</u>

In addition, Sutter had given titles to much of the Sobrante grants, under deeds of general warranty, which after the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in favor of the squatter interest Sutter was obliged to make good out of the new Helvetia grant, so that the confirmation of his title to this grant was of little advantage to him. Thus Sutter lost all his landed estate.

He endeavored to save the Hock Farm, a valuable estate on the Feather river. He had hoped to have this as a place to spend the last years of his life with his wife and children, whom he had brought from Switzerland in 1852, having been separated from them for eighteen years. This, however, he also lost in his financial failure, and, to add to his misery, his

house was totally destroyed by fire in 1865, and with it valuable records of his pioneer life.

In this forlorn state the man, who is easily the equal, in point of colonial enterprise, with Astor, made an appeal to the National Government. The State of California responded promptly, probably without a direct appeal, and for fourteen years, beginning in 1864, Sutter received \$250 per month. This sum enabled him to push his claims before the National legislative bodies. He was a petitioner before these bodies, and certainly before Congress, practically continuously from 1871 to the time of his death in 1881. If he himself was not present in Washington, his claim was presented by sympathizing Congressmen. Briefly stated, he prayed to Congress that they guarantee to him so much of the unsold public lands as the Supreme Court had caused to be taken unjustly from him, or its equivalent in money, minus the expenses which may have been heretofore incurred in the causing of his twenty-two leagues to be surveyed, and in disposing of the same. This would have amounted to 97,651 acres, or \$122,063 in money, minus the expenses above referred to.

The presence in Washington of Gen. Sutter led ultimately to his choice of Lititz as a place to spend the remaining years of his fast-waning life. Having learned of the excellent educational facilities offered by the Moravian Church at Bethlehem and Lititz, he sent his two granddaughters to Bethlehem. However, they were there but a short time, when they entered the Linden Hall Seminary, Lititz.

I presume Sutter must have held the medicinal value of Lititz Springs water in higher regard than some of us do, for we are told that he select-

ed Lititz because of the peaceful life of the community, of the educational advantages offered by the Moravian Linden Hall Seminary for his granddaughters, and, moreover, the Lititz Springs were recommended as a panacea for rheumatism, with which he was a great sufferer. The life of our quaint and quiet little town must have appealed to this rough and rugged man of the frontier, and formed an appropriate contrast to the stirring scenes and sad misfortunes of his early years. His associations with our citizens, though limited, were of a generous, benevolent and hospitable nature. His indomitable and unrelenting spirit must have been softened.

He may not have been moved religiously; he was not, for, though he was a Lutheran in early life, in later years he was not identified with any church. In 1871 the General built a substantial brick house on Main street, Lititz. This house is now owned and occupied by Mr. Charles H. Kreider, and is used as a dwelling and hardware store. Here he entertained his friends. H. H. Tshudy, Esq., Major J. R. Bricker, Esq., and Dr. J. H. Shenk, all of whom have since died, were some of his most intimate associates. As we have said, he was troubled with rheumatism, and always walked with a cane. He walked regularly, but never a great distance. He was regular in his habits, always rising at 4 o'clock and retiring at 8. He read magazines, papers and books assiduously, and could speak five languages fluently—English, German, French, Spanish and Italian. As a certain writer says, he was the most interesting conversationalist Lititz ever had. I can give you no better idea of the man's disposition than to quote a telegram sent by him to Francis D. Clarke, Esq., on the occasion of the



annual banquet of the Pioneer Society of which he was a member, January 20, 1879:

"To my associates assembled at the Steertevant House, New York: Sick in heart and body, in vain appealing to Congress to do me justice and to return only part of what was wrongly taken from me, and with little hope of success this session, unless you my friends by your influence will aid my cause, I could not feel cheerful as your guest at the table to-night, and I did not want to mar your pleasure by my presence. Remember old times without me."

A New York Herald representative. December 7, 1874, writes this about him: "I yesterday met Captain Sutter in the California wine store on Broadway, opposite Ball & Blake's; a hale, hearty old gentleman, with a venerable air and appearance.....He is said to be a generous, unsuspecting, jovial gentleman, and to have lost his fortune through generosity." Robert Livingston Jenkins, a citizen of Lebanon, Pa., also spoke to me of the General's good qualities. Mr. Jenkins knew him in California and also afterward at Lititz. On the day of the funeral of Gen. Sutter, Gen. J. C. Fremont described the death of the General in these words: "I will tell you of his death. It was on the evening of the day Congress adjourned that this good, but hitherto almost broken hearted, pioneer of pioneers was sitting in his room at the St. Charles Hotel, Washington, D. C. He had just heard that for the sixteenth time his request had been denied him. (The claim had been passed by the House and was in the Senate on its final passage when an overzealous Senator spoke so long upon the resolution that a motion to adjourn was ordered and carried. The bill was

not reached again that session). His heart was almost broken. He took up his writing to inform his wife at Lititz, when his strength failed, and he retired. The next day, June 19, 1880, a friend had called to console him and was returning when he met Senator Voorhees, who said, 'Well, how is the General to-day?' 'He is down,' was the reply. 'You ought to go and see him.' 'Well,' said Senator Voorhees, 'I cannot go to-day, but on Saturday morning you come with me and we will go together and see him.' On Friday at 2 p. m. Senator Voorhees was informed that General Sutter was dead. It was the Senator's intention to inform the General that at the opening of the next Congress he would again press his claim, but it was too late."

After short services over the body on Saturday afternoon, conducted by Rev. Byron Sutherland, D.D., it was borne by some of his old California comrades to the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Station and brought home under the escort of the late Haydn Tshudy, Esq., also an intimate friend of the deceased. The final funeral rites were held on the following Thursday afternoon. A delegation of the Pioneer Society of New York, of which Sutter was president, attended in a body, among the number being Generals Fremont and Gibson, the former of whom delivered a eulogy. In his sermon Rev. Charles Nagel referred beautifully to Sutter's settlement in Lititz in 1871, his retired life, his grand characteristics, his patience and suffering during the fifteen years of struggle to have Congress indemnify him for his losses: how he was compelled to return home from time to time disappointed; when he would again and again hide himself, as it were, from public gaze. Let

me also quote from the sermon: "His grand passion was work. The education and improvement of the people and country of the far West were his aim. His settled purpose seemed to be to live for others; his ambition was to fill the place of the American citizens to the advantage of the whole country. General Sutter was a great man, and there were many traits in his character worth imitating. The country has lost a faithful citizen, Lititz an excellent townsman." In this connection permit me also to quote General Sherman: "To him (Sutter) more than to any single person are we indebted for the conquest of California, with all its treasures."

The men who acted as pall-bearers were citizens of Lititz, viz: Samuel E. Grosh, Isaac Bomberger, Dr. P. J. Roebuck, Samuel Foltz, Adam B. Reidenbach and George Ochs, the three last-named being still alive. "The great pioneer of the days of old, the days of gold, the days of '49 in California," had finally found a resting-place among those whose customs he had learned to love, in the "Quaint Little God's Acre" south of the church. The Sutter vault is located apart from the other graves upon a rising plot of ground, to the right of the entrance. The vault consists of a marble slab which rests upon a granite base, and the whole is inclosed by a granite coping. Upon the slab is this simple inscription:

GENERAL JOHN A. SUTTER,

Born, Feb. 28, 1803,

At Kandern, Baden,

Died, June 18th, 1880,

At Washington, D. C.

Requiescat in Pacem.

ANNA SUTTER (nee Dubelt).

Born Sept. 15, 1805.

Died January 19th, 1881,

At Lititz.

Above this inscription is the Sutter coat of arms, an eagle and a shield. Though his life was filled with bitterness and strife, his last resting place is in appropriate contrast. Surrounding and sheltering this simple slab are rows of pines and maples, whose friendly branches ever whisper sweetly peace and rest to the forms that lie below.

After the death of her husband Mrs. Sutter lived a life of seclusion, submitting to public gaze only when necessary. She survived her husband only about seven months. Her death occurred January 19, 1881, and she was buried in the same vault with her husband.

General Sutter had three children, two sons and a daughter. John, Jr., was married twice, both of his wives having been Mexicans, the latter having been of noble birth, and therefore probably of Spanish origin. He was for some years Consul at Acapulco in Mexico, and died at this place. One of his sons, John, Jr., now resides at Flatbush, L. I. His two daughters, Carmen and Annie, were married to a Mr. Smith and Mr. Harry Hull, respectively. Annie, the General's only daughter, married Dr. Victor Link, and lived for a time at Acapulco, and some time in the States, but, I think, has since returned to Acapulco. Emile, the other son, was never married. He frequently labored under hallucinations, and seemed to be somewhat unbalanced. He had gone to Europe to dispose of some mines, and, while staying in a hotel at Ostend, Belgium, on the morning of July 4, 1881, was found lying dead on the bed. A half-empty bottle of laudanum was lying on the table, and his pocketbook had been rifled of its contents. For this theft his servant was pun-

ished. Though indications pointed to suicide, the physician who made the autopsy stated that the cause of death was an aneurism.

On August 3, 1909, the Moravian Cemetery Association of Lititz received a letter from J. R. Knowland, member of Congress from California, and Grand President of the Native Sons of the Golden West, stating that their order had, at a cost of \$100,000, restored "Sutter's Fort" in the city of Sacramento, and inquiring how permission could be obtained for the removal of the General's body to California. The association received a second letter on May 10, 1910, from the same gentleman. This time he asked the congregation what action had been taken, and stated that the Order of Native Sons is anxious to place these remains within Sutter's Fort, and that the Fort is now the property of the State of California and kept up by it. The Secretary of the congregation, at the instance of that body, replied that they would first have to secure the consent of the descendants, and, in that event, to remove also the remains of Mrs. Sutter. The descendants, however, would not consent to such action. They are satisfied that, in view of the bitter circumstances under which their distinguished progenitor had left California, they would much prefer his remains to rest in the peaceful town where he enjoyed his last days.

What, then, shall we say of this man? I have already referred to his generosity, hospitality, kindness, patience, justice, fidelity, bravery, and also his sociable disposition. Let me give you an illustration of his humility: On August 20, 1853, Captain A. Andrews, of Company A, Second Ohio Regiment, in an appropriate and elab-

orate letter of praise for the services which Sutter rendered to California, formally presented him with a sword as a token of his esteem. The following is the General's reply:

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your highly-esteemed favor of this date, accompanied by a sword. I claim no credit whatever for any services I may have rendered in the early days of California. As one of its pioneers, I could not do less than use my best exertion to promote its prosperity, and contribute to the comfort and enjoyment of those who followed me to its lovely valleys. To do so was pleasure, and that alone prompted me in everything that I did. If in promoting my own pleasure I have been so fortunate as to secure the esteem of my fellow-citizens, I am doubly paid. For the expression of your personal consideration and the sword which you present as a token of that consideration. You will please accept my thanks, and you may rest assured that I shall ever cherish a lively remembrance of your kindness. With, dear sir, the assurance of my personal esteem, I am

'Most respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"J. A. S."

All the authorities who estimate his character are definite in their unstinted praise of him, with one exception, Mr. D. C. Swasey, who is at present preparing a history of Sutter's life. He says Sutter was an intriguer, who used every means to forward his own interests at the expense of others. He accuses him of having been a deserter from the Government he swore allegiance to, in the hour of distress. He charges him with having been an adventurer who

quarreled with every associate; a merchant who never paid a debt he could avoid; and a schemer whose energy was but a phase of reckless enthusiasm and whose executive ability did not extend beyond subjecting Indians. The final charge is one of having plotted against the United States while secretly showing friendship for its people. I presume the author has proof to substantiate these charges and assertions. The records that I have consulted, meager though they may have been, revealed nothing which could have justified me in speaking in any but the highest of terms of General John Augustus Sutter. I express the hope, also, that our society and the citizens of Lititz, or either, by means of a tablet or marker, will perpetuate the memory of this distinguished compatriot, pioneer, countryman and citizen, who, in his lifetime, honored us with his association, and who, in his death, hallows the plot—"God's Acre"—in which he awaits "The Last Summons."

Much of the data for this paper was secured from the following sources: Dunbar, Edward, *The Romance of the Age*, N. Y., Appleton, 1867; Cronise, T. F., *Natural Wealth of California*, H. H. Bancroft Co., 1868; Soule's, Frank, *Annals of San Francisco*; Schoonover, T. J., *Life and Times of Gen. John A. Sutter*, Sacramento, Bullock-Carpenter Printing Co., 1907; Upham, Samuel C., *Notes on Voyage to California*, Philadelphia, author, 1873; *Out West*, Los Angeles, California, published by Land of Sunshine Co., Oct., 1902; *Overland Monthly*, San Francisco, Appleton, N. Y., 1855; San Francisco, A. Roman & Co., August, 1904; *History of the Donner Party*, by C. F. McGlashan, Esq., H. F. Crocker Co., 1907. I am indebted for informa-

tion to the following persons: Miss E. Carrie Tshudy, of Lititz; Mr. Robert Livingston Jenkins, of Mt. Gretna, Lebanon county, Pa.; John G. Zook, author of History of Lititz, which book contains an account of the life of Sutter, the current files of The Lancaster Daily New Era.



## Minutes of December Meeting.

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Lancaster, Pa., December 5.

The members of the Lancaster County Historical Society were in session this evening when they listened to a very entertaining paper, read by Prof. Jacob B. Landis, of Franklin and Marshall Academy, on "The Life and Work of General John A. Sutter," on whose land in California gold was discovered in 1848 by one Marshall, who was employed by Sutter on his estate. Prof. Landis had made a thorough search for material for his excellent paper, which was most complete in giving a history of the early gold excitement on the Pacific Coast.

The Society took action which will make its library more valuable to historical students and others. On motion of Dr. R. K. Buehrle, a resolution was adopted giving the use of the books of the library to those persons who are engaged in research work. Frequently inquiries are made at the public library for books along historical lines which are not found in the collection of that library. These inquiries could readily be supplied by the Historical library, but the books there were never available except when the librarian, Miss Lottie M. Bausman, was there. Under the new arrangement, the librarian of the public library, Miss Myers, will have access to the books of the historical library, thus enlarging the scope of the public library, and increasing the usefulness of the Historical Society. The books of the latter will not, however, be allowed to be taken from the

building except by members, but strangers will be allowed to consult them at will in the library building.

The librarian, Miss Lottie M. Bausman, presented the following report:

Bound Volumes—American Historical Association, annual report, Vol. I, 1911; Laws of Pennsylvania, 1913; Bureau of American Ethnology, Chipewa Music; Report of the Commissioner of Banking, 1912; Report of the Secretary of Internal Affairs, 1912, Pt. IV; Vetoes by the Governor, 1913; Message of the Governor, 1913; Report of the State Librarian, 1912; Report of the Superintendent of Public Printing, 1912.

Magazines and Pamphlets—Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Conference of Historical Societies; The James Sprunt Historical Publications, 2 numbers, from the University of North Carolina; Annual Report of The Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland; Lebanon County Historical Society, Vol. VI, No. 4; Linden Hall Echo; Classified Catalogue of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, part V; International Conciliation; Bulletin of Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh; Bulletin of Grand Rapids Public Library.

A post card of the oldest known Landis Homestead, 1488, Hirzel, Switzerland, from D. B. Landis; History of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and Directory of the Principal Business Houses, 1869, from F. R. Diffenderffer; an original paper concerning the paving of King street, in the borough of Lancaster, 1802, from F. R. Diffenderffer; a number of the society's pamphlets, from Miss Rebecca Stamm; picture of General John A. Sutter, from the family of the late Captain John Bricker, Lititz; three

Hicks Almanacs, from George H. Rothermel.

A vote of thanks was extended the donors.

On motion the old officers were re-nominated for the ensuing year, the election to take place at the January meeting. The nominations were as follows: President, George Steinman; vice presidents, F. R. Diffenderffer and W. U. Hensel; corresponding secretary, Miss Martha B. Clark; recording secretary, Charles B. Hollinger; librarian, Miss Lottie M. Bausman; treasurer, A. K. Hostetter; executive committee, Mrs. Sarah B. Carpenter, Mrs. M. N. Robinson, D. F. Magee, Esq., H. Frank Eshleman, Esq., D. B. Landis, George F. K. Erisman, Dr. R. K. Buehrle, L. B. Herr, John L. Summy, Monroe B. Hirsh.

The following new members were elected: J. Newton Stauffer, Mrs. W. C. Sapp, Mrs. Walter C. Herr, W. Y. Haldy, A. A. Hubley, Harry B. Hostetter, Edward D. Ruth and C. H. Martin, of this city; Margaret Wade, of Washington, D. C., and Mrs. Estelle Bucher, of Mt. Joy.

The following were proposed for membership: D. H. Sensenig, of this city; Mrs. John Scott, of Philadelphia; Samuel S. Symons, Marietta; H. C. Symons, Millersville, and John G. Zook, Lititz.









